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AT&T External Affairs
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Mr. Peter Naghavi
Acting Director of Public Services
City of Costa Mesa
Costa Mesa, CA 92628

Dear Mr. Naghavi:

This responds to the request of the City of Costa Mesa staff for information regarding construction of AT&T's Lightspeed network upgrade. Specifically, City staff asked AT&T to address the following specific issues related to Lightspeed construction.

1. Does Lightspeed Require Above-Ground Cabinets?

Generally yes, Lightspeed cabinets cannot, as a practical matter, be underground. There are many reasons for this.

- Lightspeed technology consists of high-speed electronic circuitry needed to light the fiber-optics and convert the fiber signal to a bandwidth that can be transmitted over copper to residences. As such, if it were placed underground, it would have to be in a controlled environment, free from moisture and excessive temperature extremes. It would also have to be placed in a vault or enclosure large enough for regular access by our technicians for routine maintenance and repair.
- Other factors limiting the feasibility of placing Lightspeed cabinets in an underground vault include the need for backup power, lighting, gas testing, ventilation, cooling, alarms, emergency water pumping, and waterproofing.
- There is clearly not enough room in some residential public rights of way for these large underground vaults. The vaults could block use of the rights of way by other utilities, including City water and sewer, creating traffic issues during construction and after completion when being accessed by our technicians. In addition, the above-ground Lightspeed cabinet was designed to fit within the right of way usually behind or in the sidewalk area. The access point for an underground vault would most likely extend into the road portion of the right of way creating potential safety concerns.

- It is not economically feasible to construct new controlled environmental vaults solely for Lightspeed technology. It is not rational for the City to require a method of construction that cannot be accomplished in an economically reasonable way. Ultimately, however, it is AT&T that must decide the feasibility of any particular technology; the City cannot legally dictate AT&T's method of construction.
- In any event, controlled environmental vaults require an above-ground component for cooling, ventilation, and technician access. The size of this portion of the CEV is comparable to most Lightspeed cabinets.

That said, where it is possible for AT&T to use existing controlled environmental vaults to deploy Lightspeed technology underground (i.e., where a vault exists, has available space, and is in close proximity to our residential customers), AT&T will use them. However, it is not technically, practically, or economically feasible to construct new vaults solely for Lightspeed.

2. Will AT&T Agree To Plant Vegetative Screening Around Cabinets?

Yes, where it makes sense given the surrounding location, AT&T will work with City staff to screen cabinets by installing drought-resistant vegetation as part of the construction process. AT&T will also replace any such plantings that do not survive 6 months after construction. AT&T has found that hardscape screening is generally not as effective in screening cabinets as vegetation, as the screening itself tends to bring more attention to the cabinet and use up more available rights of way. That said, AT&T has found that screening issues are best addressed site-by-site, and it commits to work with the staff on these issues on a site-by-site basis.

3. Can AT&T Match The SAI and Lightspeed Cabinets?

Not exactly; however, the cabinets may be very similar in many locations when we are finished with construction. While AT&T's network, built over many generations, has many different sized and colored cabinets, AT&T's latest standard, low-profile (48") Lightspeed cabinet is similar in size to many of the existing Service Area Interface (SAI) cabinets with which it will be paired. Lightspeed cabinets come in two colors, and, where reasonably requested by staff, AT&T will paint the SAI cabinet so that it matches the color of the new Lightspeed cabinet.

4. Will AT&T Combine Lightspeed Cabinets Where Possible?

Absolutely. Although Lightspeed cabinets must pair with an existing SAI, and generally need to be installed on a 1-to-1 basis and in close proximity to the SAI with which they are paired, there are some circumstances where one Lightspeed cabinet can serve two SAIs that are very close together. While this installation generally requires a larger Lightspeed cabinet, where there is a good place for such a cabinet, AT&T will work with the City staff to ensure that only one cabinet is installed.

5. Does AT&T Have A Stainless Steel Lightspeed Cabinet?

No. The Lightspeed cabinets come in either light tan or light green, and are made of a reflective material to help keep the cabinet (and electronics) cool, the noise down, and graffiti easy to remove (a graffiti-resistant coating is baked on at the factory).

6. Would AT&T Consider Installing Future Cabinets With Doors Opening Toward A Sidewalk?

Yes. Although it is AT&T's policy to have cabinet doors open to the street, and AT&T believes that such an installation probably will make sense in most areas, where it is appropriate for the neighborhood and sidewalk, in compliance with all applicable laws (such as the American with Disabilities Act), AT&T would be willing to work with the City staff to install cabinets with doors facing toward a sidewalk.

7. Can AT&T Paint Or Place Mylar Film On Lightspeed Cabinets?

No. As noted in response to question 5, above, only two color cabinets are available. Using paint on the cabinet can destroy the graffiti-resistant coating and the reflective nature of the cabinets, which is essential to protect the technology inside. City staff may select the color at each site, however, by stating in the permit which of the available colors should be used.

8. Will AT&T Put Less Obtrusive Number Decals On Lightspeed Cabinets?

Yes. AT&T can install 1 1/2" black letters on a light (usually silver) background on Lightspeed cabinets, as long as the City staff so directs in the permit.

I trust this responds to the questions you have raised, but please contact me if you require any additional information.

Very Truly Yours,



Jeff L. Morin
Director - External Affairs

cc: Allan Roeder - City Manager